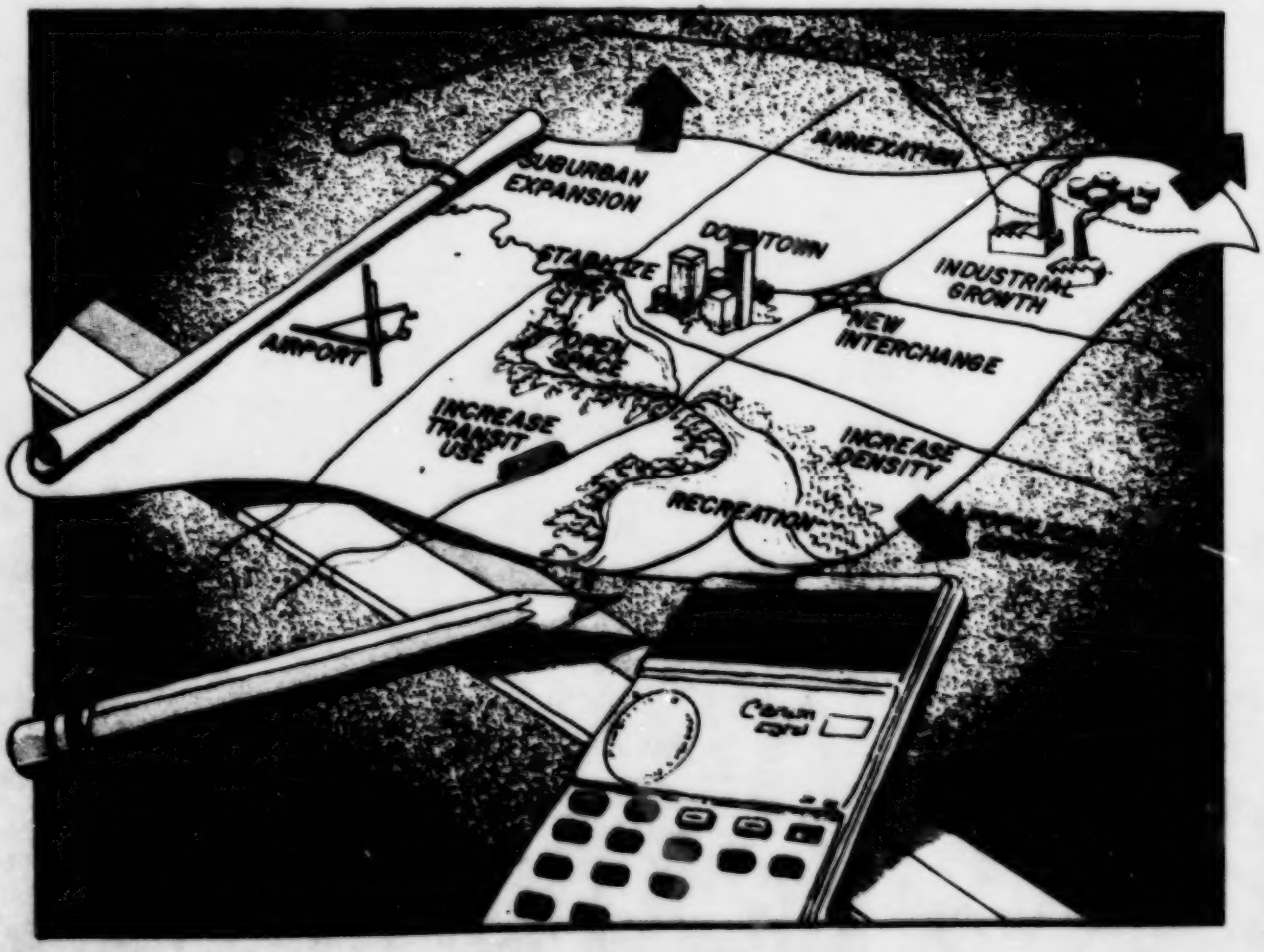
WORKING PAPER TOWARDS A NEW DEVELOPMENT PLAN

CITY OF REGINA PLANNING DEPARTMENT · MAY · 1985



WORKING PAPER
TOWARDS A NEW DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Prepared by: City of Regina: Planning Department

Date of First Publication: May 1985

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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Conceptual Framework

During 1985-86, the Planning Department will be undertaking a major review of the existing Regina Development Plan. Although this plan was adopted in 1984, it contains only minor modifications from the 1979 Regina - RSVP plan that were necessary to ensure compliance with the new Planning and Development Act. Consequently, a more thorough evaluation is anticipated in this review because many new planning issues have emerged (i.e. energy conservation, heritage preservation) and additional studies have been adopted that are not included in the policies of Regina - RSVP.[1] A fresh approach may be needed to reflect the changing urban population and demographic trends of the 1980's and beyond.

While Regina - RSVP has appeared to stand up well as a long-term strategy for managing urban growth, experience gained from implementing its policies over the past six years has shown weaknesses that can be addressed in a new or revised plan. For instance, a major consideration has been Regina - RSVP's lack of comprehensiveness that provides the necessary policy direction required to guide short-term land use and development decisions for all areas of the City. However, when Regina RSVP was adopted in 1979, it was intended to only establish a general policy framework, with a clear understanding that more detailed area studies would be undertaken to provide specific policy and implementation measures. For the most part such studies have taken place to fill identified gaps in the plan, such as the downtown plan, although budgetary constraints delayed the onset of a few studies, notably the one for housing. The number of studies that have been completed have on occasion made the plan unwieldy and difficult to comprehend.

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1. Although it has been replaced by the Regina Development Plan, this paper will refer to Regina - RSVP since it established the overall planning strategy reflected in the later plan.

This paper reveals that many of the specific policies that were adopted have became dated due to evolving development patterns, changing government priorities, and fulfillment of programs proposed by the plan. The Planning Department recognized in 1982 that Regina RSVP policies would soon require updating. Unfortunately, budgetary constraints again did not permit this work to get fully underway until 1985. As a result, Regina RSVP policies have perhaps become more dated than was the intention of the Planning Department when the plan was initially formulated. Given the above, the need for review is essential at this time.

The work schedule for the review program has already commenced with the preparation and consolidation of various background papers that provide analysis of suburban growth options, redevelopment and infill, and population projections. The series of background studies, of which this discussion paper will be the last, attempt to initiate the evaluation and rethinking process that is an integral part of preparing a new development plan.

The legislative context for this exercise is set by The Planning and Development Act 1983, which establishes the purpose of a development plan, as follows:

1) To serve as a framework whereby the municipality may be guided in making development decisions.

2) To identify the factors relevant to the use and development of land.

3) To identify the critical problems and opportunities concerning the development of the land and the social, environmental and economic effects of that development.

4) To set out the desired timing, patterns and characteristics of the future physical, social and economic development of the municipality and to determine the probable consequences of that development.

5) To establish and specify the programs and actions necessary for the implementation of the plan.

6) To outline the methods whereby the best use and development of land and other resources in adjacent municipalities, or affected areas immediately abutting thereto, may be coordinated.

The City is given a wide scope to formulate a development plan that provides a clear direction for the future growth of the municipality. Specific objectives and policies, and the means to implement them, can be established concerning land use, transportation, municipal infrastructure, economic development, social issues, and environmental impacts. Perhaps most critical is that the plan reflect the public interest in the direction it establishes and the policies that are adopted to achieve its goals and objectives.

1.2 Purpose and Significance of the Discussion Paper

The purpose of the paper is to analyze the impact of Regina - RSVP policies on planning and development in Regina, taking into consideration both the general planning approach and specific issues and policies outlined in the plan. Based on this analysis, the policies that, (1) have become dated or have been fulfilled, (2) are still relevant but require updating, or (3) have emerged since Regina - RSVP was adopted, are identified. With regard to emerging issues, the paper also attempts to speculate about urban lifestyle trends that will require new long-range policies to satisfy future needs.

The paper is intended to initiate a general discussion of the existing development plan in order to provide some direction on the approach the new plan should take. Having established where we have been and where we are now, the stage will have been set to determine where we should go from here. Hence, the title of this paper "Towards a New Development Plan."

Chapter 2
The Impact of Regina - RSVP on Planning and Development in the City

2.1 Background

One of the main purposes of this discussion paper is to examine the impact of Regina - RSVP on planning and development in the city. As such, this chapter examines the impact of the overall planning approach in some detail, as it provided the guiding force for the specific policy objectives and implementation measures of the plan. The impact of specific policies, such as those for suburban growth, are examined in Appendix A.

In reviewing the impact of Regina - RSVP, it is necessary to first consider the status of the planning process preceding the advent of this plan. Generally, the process consisted of either the master plan approach (i.e. Faludi's 1946 scheme) or planning by regulation. Master plans attempted to create, in purely physical terms, an ideal but perhaps unrealistic vision of the future city. Consequently, they were virtually ignored as planning simply became a regulatory activity through a series of zoning bylaws. These bylaws lacked any overall guidelines and policy objectives for the future development of the city. According to Regina - RSVP, the planning process was reduced to an ad hoc and reactive activity that facilited private plans taking precedence over the public interest.

Recognizing the inadequacies of these approaches, Regina - RSVP attempted to establish a new planning philosophy for the city. This new philosophy contained three basic principles, namely an issue orientation, planning on a long-term policy framework, and the strategy of public planning. Concurrent with this more open, political approach to planning was a growth management strategy designed to allocate future growth in the best interests of the city. Each of these components of the overall strategy is considered in terms of how it affected planning as a process in the city.

2.2 The General Planning Approach of Regina - RSVP

2.2.1 An Issue Orientation

The discussion has already alluded to basic weaknesses of the traditional master plan, principally a too general and unrealistic approach that had a weak research base for predictions. As a result, they were rarely, if ever, implemented. For example, the 1946 Faludi scheme predicted a population of 90,000 for Regina in 1976, 50,000 short of the actual figure. Both the Faludi scheme and the subsequent 1961 Community Planning Scheme were quickly superceded by zoning bylaws as the sole planning instruments of the City.

In contrast, Regina - RSVP proposed that planning attempt to deal with more current issues and problems for which solutions appeared to be readily available and capable of being implemented. Thus, planning was to have a direct and relevant impact into the daily decision making of City government. The major issues were rail relocation, the downtown and the inner city. Emerging issues were suburban growth, transportation, and open space and recreation.

With the adoption of Regina - RSVP (and during its preparatory stages), the major thrust of the planning process did appear to change from simply a housekeeping function to on-going public discussions concerning the identified issues. From these discussions, policy objectives and area plans were prepared. Examples of these plans included the Inner City Development Plan and the two suburban sector plans. Regina - RSVP attempted to make the planning process more meaningful to the public by presenting issues that were of immediate concern instead of developing schemes illustrating the future city twenty-five years hence.

Regina - RSVP recognized there were some limitations to this approach. Short-term issues needed to be placed in a framework of coordinated long-term policies as postulated in the second principle of Regina - RSVP. The particular issues raised must be periodically updated and revised to keep the policies and implementation measures relevant to

changing circumstances. Otherwise the policies can become dated or irrelevant, a situation in which the city is beginning to find itself.

Focusing on immediate issues has also occasionally meant that comprehensive background studies were not undertaken to determine the feasibility of some of the policies that were proposed. A case in point is a policy that a certain percentage of new construction be allocated to the inner city. Little indication was provided on how that policy objective was to be achieved, as quantifiable goals and objectives were not provided. It has only been recently that a housing study has been undertaken to develop a comprehensive policy for the City and to investigate the feasibility of implementing this and other Regina - RSVP housing policies.

2.2.2 Planning in a Long-Term Policy Framework

Although the major focus of Regina - RSVP was on short-term issues, the need for a long-term perspective was also recognized. As noted above, short-term decisions were to be placed within the framework of a set of coordinated long-term policies and objectives. Only by this means could specific development proposals and policies be evaluated in terms of future objectives for the city at large. Thus, a growth strategy for future development coordinated with other city policies was necessary. Four general long-term objectives were established for the city as follows:

a) a growth strategy of residential development in the Northwest and Southeast sectors in order to make use of existing and planned infrastructure;

b) the promotion and improvement of public transit;

c) the expenditure of an increased proportion of municipal revenues in the inner city and the downtown;

d) continued land acquisition by the public sector, particularly in the inner city, but also in peripheral locations.

The underlying intent of these objectives was to shape Regina's development in a specific way, namely to create a more compact urban form.

Regina has generally followed the peripheral growth strategy as most of the new residential development is now concentrated in the Northwest and Southeast sectors. Some effort has been made to promote and improve transit (i.e. exclusive bus lanes), although per capita usage actually dropped slightly between 1980 and 1984. Municipal expenditures to help upgrade the inner city have also increased with programs such as the Neighbourhood Improvement Area program. In the case of the downtown, the City contributed to the Street Enhancement Program and the Cornwall Centre Parkade as well as building the City Hall Parkade. One difficulty was that the policy direction was somewhat vague - no priorities were set for how the increased expenditures were to be allocated. Thus, an overhead pedestrian walkway was constructed while the development of a pedestrian mall in the 1900 block of Scarth Street was not pursued. At present, there do not appear to be any new initiatives to maintain previous levels of expenditure in the downtown.

Land acquisition in the inner city took place through Saskatchewan Housing Corporations's infill housing program, although litte activity is taking place at present. SHC also has developed about 35% of its peripheral holdings in the developing suburban areas of the City. It would appear that SHC wishes to partially withdraw from involvement in the suburban land market. City Council recently agreed that up to 15% of the remaining SHC lands could be privatized.

2.2.3 The Strategy of Public Planning

The third principle of the Regina - RSVP approach was the strategy of public planning called "information, accessibility and responsiveness". Planning was to be responsive to the needs of the people on whose behalf the planning exercise was being conducted. A two-way communication process was envisaged whereby City officials would make information available and residents would make their wishes known to the City. This

dialogue was to be based on the issues identified in the first principle of the Regina - RSVP approach. As well as being responsive to the public, Regina - RSVP was committed to improving the quality of available information and to increase the ac essibility of City officials to the public. The major thrust behind the public planning principle was to begin to open up the planning process to a wider audience, the citizens of the City itself.

Before Regina - RSVP, the existence of community groups concerned about planning issues in their neighbourhoods was virtually unknown in the City. If there was any dialogue at all, it was limited to a specific development or issue. Once that issue was resolved, any on-going community involvement largely ceased to exist. No particular effort was made to involve the public in the planning process, other than to hold the occasional meeting where a completed development plan would be presented as a virtual fait accompli.

During the formative stages and following the adoption of Regina - RSVP, the City saw, and occasionally helped foster, the creation of a number of community groups, especially in the inner city. These groups began to take an active interest in the future of their neighbourhoods. Several neighbourhood plans were prepared, in which the community association participated from the initial formulation. Site offices were established in the inner city neighbourhoods to provide information and administer the Neighbourhood Improvement Porgram, the Neighbourhood Improvement Area, and Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Programs designed to help rehabilitate these neighbourhoods.

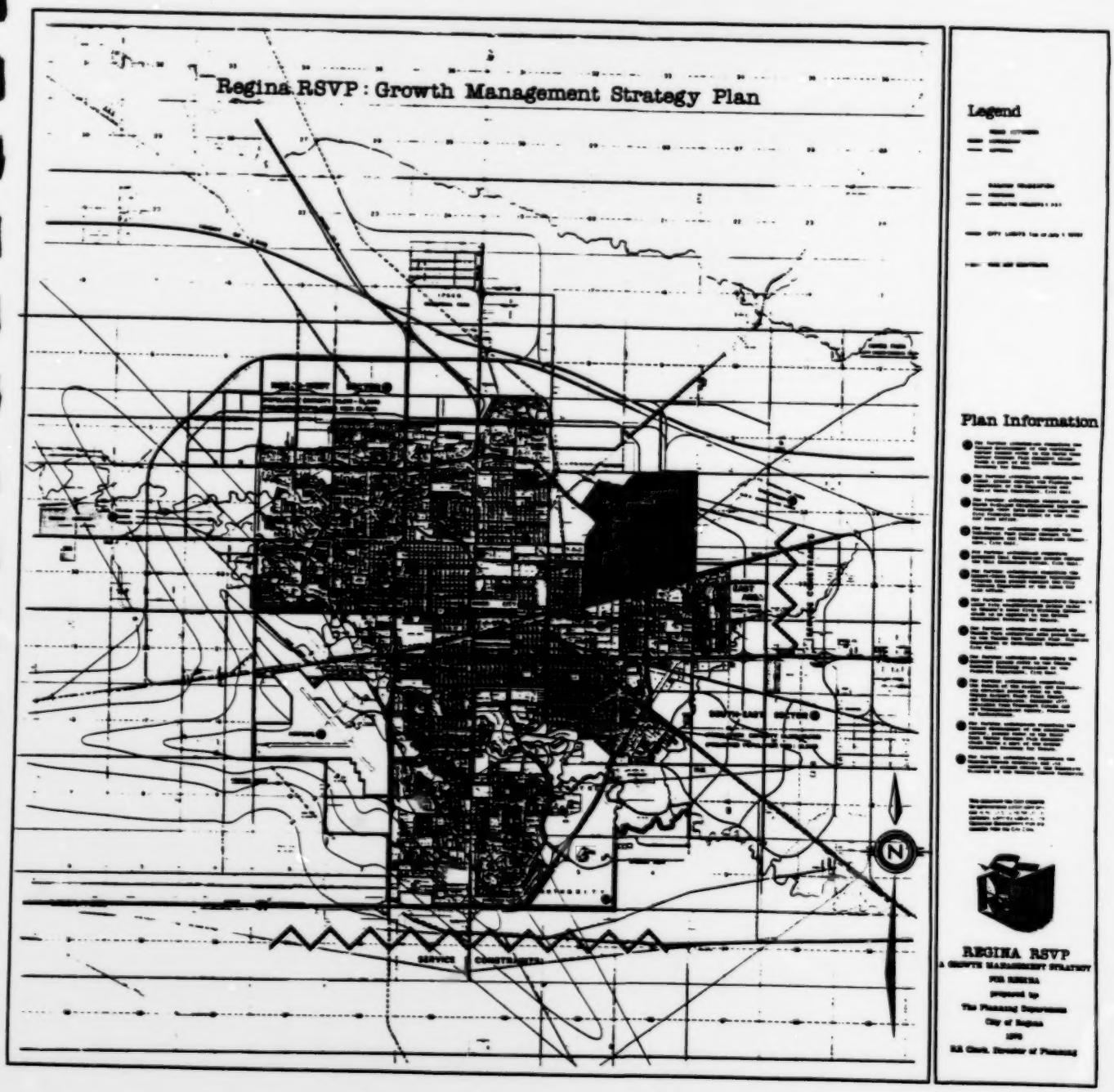
Most neighbourhoods in the City now have recognized community associations which are included in the circulation of development applications and rezoning requests. The Planning Department ensures that any comments of the community are included and addressed in the report to Council. Recently, two seminars were held to explain the approval processes to the various community associations and to provide assistance in the preparation of their responses.

These examples suggest that Regina - RSVP had a definite impact on the responsiveness and accessibility of the planning process in the city. From little involvement to the inclusion of community associations in the approval process was clearly in keeping with the objectives of Regina - RSVP. Not all of the objectives were achieved, but a fundamental change in philosophy had taken place in the Planning Department, if not the entire City Administration, toward involving the public in the planning of their City. Perhaps this change would have occurred without Regina - RSVP, but its influence certainly acted as a catalyst in fostering a more open planning process in the political arena.

To a certain extent, Regina - RSVP was unfortunately viewed within City Hall as the Planning Department's plan instead of the City Administration's. As such, the philosophy of public planning perhaps did not filter as widely through the Administration as originally hoped. In a revised development plan greater effort will have to be made to involve the whole Administration in its formulation. That objective could more likely be achieved by incorporating, where possible, the corporate goals and objectives as part of the plan.

2.2.4 Growth Management Strategy

The growth management strategy adopted by Regina - RSVP (Map 1) recognized that growth itself was a product of forces beyond the scope of the strategy. The major task was seen to be a determination of how much growth there would likely be and how it could best be accommodated. Population forecasts and the resultant demands for housing were established, especially movements of the population from existing neighbourhoods into the newly-developing suburbs. A major concern was the allocation of this growth in the best interests of the City as a whole. The strategy proposed reducing the exodus from the inner city by establishing policies to stabilize and revitalize the affected neighbourhoods. Suburban growth was to be allocated to specific sectors presenting the least restraints to growth, namely the Northwest and Southeast Sectors, in the interests of efficient use of municipal resources.


Regina RSVP : Growth Management Strategy Plan
Legend
Plan Information
REGINA RSVP

MAP 1

The growth management strategy as postulated by Regina - RSVP has had a significant impact in the planning process in the City. Before Regina - RSVP the only means of controlling development was through Zoning Bylaw #4306. For the first time a conscious planning strategy, capable of implementation, was established for Regina. The formulation of sector plans for the Northwest and Southeast areas arose directly from the strategy of allocating growth. Policies were also adopted for several sectors of the City that had previously been neglected, such as the inner city and the downtown. Issues such as rail relocation were brought to the forefront of public discussion. In sum, the growth management strategy established a plan of action that attempted to provide a firm direction and vision on how growth should be accommodated in the context of specific issues affecting development in the City.

Chapter 3
The Status of Specific Regina - RSVP Policies

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a more in depth consideration is given to the existing Regina - RSVP policies and its immediate successor, the Regina Development Plan. The purpose of this analysis is to identify those policies that:

1) Have become dated or have been fulfilled.
2) Are still relevant but require updating.
3) Have emerged since Regina - RSVP, some of which are in the Regina Development Plan.

With this information, the necessary background data will have been compiled which can form the basis for the preparation of an issue statement. The analysis of specific policies is outlined in Appendix "A".

3.2 General Planning Approach

3.2.1 An Issue Orientation

No individual policy objectives were established under this principle other than to identify the specific issues noted earlier. Taking these issues into account, each remains a relevant concern of the new plan, although the emphasis may change in certain instances. For example, the recent completion of the downtown plan establishes a comprehensive policy framework which can be included in the new plan, although continuous monitoring will still be necessary. Certain neighbourhoods of the inner city also have completed plans (Transitional Area) although an overall strategy needs to be updated for this sector.[1] Rail relocation is an

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[1] Some of the neighbourhood plans are now dated and will require revision.

ongoing issue which is now entering a new phase, since more detailed plans are being drawn up for the development of the rail lands as the reality of relocation draws nearer. Suburban growth, transportation, and open space and recreation remain relevant issues that require updating to reflect current developments and trends.

Specific issues that have emerged since Regina - RSVP include the field of social planning, incorporating planning guidelines for group homes, day care centres, and nursery schools. Housing is an important issue for which a major study will be forthcoming shortly. Heritage preservation has become increasingly significant in recent years. Energy conservation is an emerging issue which is currently the subject of a planning study. School closures are now affecting older suburban neighbourhoods. While not a specific issue in itself, the zoning and implementation mechanisms for addressing these issues have changed with the introduction of new land use control techniques such as direct control districts and contract zoning in the new Planning and Development Act.

As one of the principles of a general planning approach, an issue orientation is still an excellent means of addressing the task of plan formulation. The experience gained from Regina - RSVP has shown that this approach helps promote the involvement of the public and other affected parties in the planning process. Planning can be "demystified" by presenting the problem in a less complex and more understandable format that focuses on current issues important to the future well-being of the City. Considerable effort will be necessary, however, to expand and update the issues identified by Regina - RSVP to provide a more comprehensive picture of the current planning problems facing the City.

3.2.2 Planning in a Long-Term Policy Framework

The discussion in the previous chapter outlined four general policy objectives on which the long-term policy framework of Regina - RSVP was to be based. The first objective, a Northwest and Southeast sector residential growth strategy, has been fulfilled as residential

development continues to expand in those two directions. A recent study "Working Paper on Suburban Growth Options" suggests that the Northwest and Southeast Sectors be maintained as the priority suburban development areas, with amendments to include the lands up to and including the buffer area of the proposed railway corridor. Additional growth areas were also identified, as the 1983 study "Overview of Regina's Population and Development Trends" warned that all available lands in the sector plans could be developed by 2001 due to lower than expected population densities. Because of the low densities, an easterly extension of Glencairn Village was proposed as a second priority development area. Sector plans were recommended for the southwest quadrant of the City (including the airport)and northeast of the existing Ross Industrial Park in order to keep future development options open.

Promotion and improvement of public transit remains an ongoing objective. The implementation of bus lanes has improved the circulation and service reliability of buses in the Core Area. Unfortunately, the frequency of parked cars along 11th Avenue reduces the effectiveness of the bus lanes. In addition, automobile-oriented subdivision design and low density suburban development have contributed to a stagnant per-capita transit ridership. Specifically, the completion of Saskatchewan and Lewvan Drives and the construction of parkades for downtown employees has encouraged automobile use at the expense of transit ridership.[2] The updated parking policy, which maintains the minimum parking requirement for major office developments and which allows payment-in-lieu for the future construction of parkades is detrimental to potential ridership increases. However, the new Planning and Development Act also allows these cash-in-lieu funds to be used for the capital costs of a transit system, a policy (along with other policies) that could be pursued in the new Development Plan to help promote increased transit usage.

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[2] Peak hour transit usage remains at 25% of all trips to and from the downtown.

An expenditure of an increased proportion of municipal revenues in the inner city and the downtown has been fulfilled to the extent of the programs that were implemented as described in the previous chapter. Comparisons of municipal expenditures in the various parts of the City over the last decade would be necessary to obtain a quantitative measure of this objective. Considering the importance of the downtown and the inner city, increasing municipal expenditures in these two areas remains a valid objective, although the means of implementing such increased expenditures should be reviewed. A recent trend towards reduced senior governmental involvement in municipal improvement programs may require even greater municipal expenditures to maintain or perhaps improve the existing level of services.

Land acquisition by the public sector (presumably for residential development) has been fulfilled through SHC - suburban development and infill housing programs. In addition, the City is developing the 80 acre Richmond Place subdivision. If SHC chooses to gradually reduce its role in these areas, this objective will have to be re-evaluated. Is there a role for the public sector in the residential land and housing market? What benefits are achieved and how would continued land acquisition be financed are just a few of the questions to be addressed.

3.2.3 The Strategy of Public Planning

Chapter 2 outlined the considerable impact that Regina - RSVP had on promoting greater public involvement in the planning process. Although the general objective has been fulfilled, it remains a valid approach for the new development plan if the principle of citizen participation in the planning process is to be maintained. The need for greater involvement in this approach by other City Departments is discussed in Section 2.3.3. Specific policies that were established under this strategy are examined in Appendix "A".

3.2.4 Growth Management Strategy

A growth management strategy is still an appropriate means of planning for future growth. A realistic plan can be formulated for the direction of urban growth in the best interests of the City if it is based on a reasonably accurate and up-to-date forecast of population and demographic trends. As this forecast was recently completed, the necessary framework has been established to update the strategy established in Regina - RSVP.

3.3 Specific Issues

3.3.1 Rail Relocation

It is assumed that relocation of the rail yards will continue to be a major component of the City's Development Plan. Plans for redevelopment of the CNR yards have been presented to the Canadian Transport Commission as part of the overall package including a transportation plan, cost-benefit analysis, financial plan and the redevelopment plan. It is also anticipated that the CPR yard plan will be forwarded to the CTC before the Rail Relocation hearings are scheduled later this year. An emerging issue is how rail relocation will affect the inner city.

3.3.2 Downtown

A new downtown plan is now nearing the final stage of adoption as part of the Development Plan. Further review of this issue should not be necessary as part of the work program for the new plan. The issues facing the downtown have been addressed in the "Downtown in the City" document.

3.3.3 Inner City

In general, the policies dealing with inner city housing, including the provision of an information base and the hiring of a housing co-ordinator, have not been implemented owing to budgetary and other constraints. However, the housing study is expected to address most of

the housing related concerns noted in the policies discussed in Appendix "A". The neighbourhood improvement programs were implemented, however, with some visible positive results. Reference to the Inner City Development Plan is also necessary since it contains a number of related policies. This plan did encourage greater stability while facilitating infill housing and defining appropriate service areas. On the other hand, the boundaries of the inner city seemed somewhat ambigious, overzoning for multiple housing is evident and other specific zoning amendments are needed for individual neighbourhoods.

3.3.4 Suburban Growth

Regina - RSVP stressed the problems, both physical and financial, which have stemmed from low-density suburban development. Higher densities were encouraged through innovations in housing design and mixing of land uses wherever possible. The discussion has already alluded to the fact that this policy was not completely successful. One of the problems was that the density targets were perhaps set too high considering the nature of the local housing market. Although the encouragement of higher density remains a worthwhile objective, the means of realistically fulfilling it will have to be re-evaluated. The role of the City in influencing suburban land development is another issue which will have to be considered.

3.3.5 Transportation

Regarding transportation, two policy objectives were established as follows:

1) To provide transportation alternatives aside from the private automobile, particularly in the downtown.

2) To provide a hierarchy of transportation arteries designed to carry high volumes of automobiles and buses. This transportation system should avoid intrusion into the existing neighborhood areas.

As noted in Section 3.2.2 roadway and parking policies have been implemented which discourage transit usage. Increased ridership could be encouraged by higher suburban residential densities and improved subdivision design to facilitate the provision of an effective transit service. The latter requires planning of bus routes in conjunction with the design of concept plans. In addition, improved operation of existing bus lanes and additional priority measures such as an exclusive downtown transit mall need to be explored.

With regard to the second objective, the existing development plan has played a very limited role in the fulfillment of the City's transportation policies. For transit, it is desirable for bus routes to follow arterials and major collectors as opposed to local residential streets. However, limited access roadways such as the Lewvan, Saskatchewan Drive and Arcola Avenue, enclose neighbourhoods and restrict pedestrian access. The design of these roadways are not conducive to transit usage and facilitate high volume of automobile traffic to and from the downtown.

Given the above, the new Development Plan should incorporate an overall transportation policy which addresses the inter-relationship of roadways, traffic, parking, transit, and other transportation alternatives. Other areas of concern include the need for and spacing of major arterials, direction of growth, and the impact on existing neighbourhoods.

3.3.6 Open Space and Recreation

Regina - RSVP contained a number of policies concerning open space and recreation isues which had been originally submitted by the Parks and Recreation Department. Due to a change in leadership and direction of that department, these policies were superceded by new priorities and programs. Further discussions will be necessary with the Parks and Recreation Department to ensure that the new plan reflects the City's current open space and recreation policies.

3.3.7 Airport Environs

In 1984, the Federal Minister of Transport undertook the Regina Airfield Study which was a review and update of the Regina Airport Study, 1977. The earlier study recommended the construction of a new runway parallel to the existing one based on a forecast of a large increase in air traffic and associated noise. The 1984 study will determine whether the additional runway is actually needed given the less than projected air traffic volumes. In the meantime, the Ministry of Transport has been purchasing land to accommodate minor runway extensions, new taxiways, etc. A final decision of the Minister as to the need for the second runway is expected shortly.

Considering the investment that has been made in the airport expansion, it would appear that the option for relocating the airport in the next two decades is not viable unless sufficiently compelling reasons justifying the costs of such a move can be made.

3.3.8 Warehouse District Planning Study

The Warehouse District major policy thrust was to encourage adaptive re-use of existing structures and redevelopment of underutilized areas/storage yards and low intensity industrial/commercial development. The new Development Plan will contain general policy objectives for the area while the detailed background study will form an appendix to the plan.

3.3.9 Heritage Preservation

Although Regina - RSVP did not address the heritage issue, it has come to the forefront since 1979 with the establishment of the Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee, the designation of a number of municipal and provincial buildings, and the occasional controversy over the merits of designating a particular building, usually in the private sector. In addition to specific heritage policy objectives for particular areas of the City, a general heritage section could be included in the new

development plan to address a number of related concerns. These include incentives for heritage preservation, establishment of heritage conservation districts, and policies for government-owned heritage properties.

3.3.10 Energy Efficient Community Development

Although Regina - RSVP had no specific policies concerning energy efficiency in planning, many policies were included such as increasing residential densities, encouraging inner city revitalization, limiting urban sprawl and promoting transit use, which were consistent with good energy conservation practises. Consideration should be given to including specific energy policies in the development plan since:

1) energy costs are continuing to increase;

2) considerable research by other agencies has revealed new techniques for energy efficient community development;

3) The new Planning and Development Act specifically identifies the use and conservation of energy as a subject for which a development plan may contain policies.

4) It can be most effectively addressed as an integral part of planning.

An energy efficient community development study has commenced. Its findings should be incorporated in the new plan.

3.3.11 Social Planning

The issue of social planning was not dealt with specifically in Regina - RSVP although such issues were a concern in the policies for a number of areas, primarily the inner city. For example, social objectives were set for the NIP and NIA programs, although few, if any, attempts were made to evaluate them. There appears to be a need to identify social issues and opportunities, both existing and emerging, for which social planning objectives and action can be established. Such policies might include the provision of housing opportunities for all income groups in new subdivisions.

3.3.12 Housing

Regina - RSVP had various policies directed towards housing included within the downtown, inner city and suburban growth sections. Although the initial ground work for an overall housing study began in 1980, a full-fledged effort did not get underway until 1984 owing to budgetary constraints. That study is now nearing completion. Its recommendations will need to be incorporated in the new development plan.

Chapter 4
Present and Future Trends

Perhaps the most difficult part of preparing a development plan is conceptualizing a future vision of the City, whether that is 5 years or 25 years hence. The farther in the future the forecast is made, the more likely that unforeseen changes and trends will negate the predictions and plans that are set forth. Nevertheless, the services and facilities that are being developed today will last into the next century and the public investment that is made to accommodate future growth should be employed efficiently in the best interests of the City as a whole. Given the lengthy lead time required for public improvements, and their relatively long life span after construction, long-range planning objectives must be designed to be readily adaptable to changes in the urban environment that will surely occur over the lifetime of the plan. Monitoring and re-evaluation of the policies is important approximately every five years. This task can be hopefully made less overwhelming by an accurate forecast of urban demographic trends that will require new long-range planning objectives to meet future needs.

One forecasting technique regularly employed is population projections. Important decisions in land use, the location of roads and utility lines, housing programs, schools and social services, to name a few, are often based on these projections. Periodic updating of the projections is necessary, however, since factors such as changes in government policy, social trends, or technological advance can affect the accuracy of the predictions. Especially important are economic conditions which can drastically affect in/out migration, a major factor in population change.

The Planning Department recently released a background study titled "The Population Projection 1984 Forecast" which identifies a number of population and demographic trends in the City up to the year 2011. If the identified trends continue up to the target year, they will have major implications for the long-term policy objectives that are

formulated in the new development plan. For example, by 1995, 200,000 people and by 2011, 250,000 people will reside in the Regina urban region. This additional population will have to be accommodated either by continued suburban expansion of the City or existing neighbourhood infill or some combination of the alternatives.

Another significant demographic trend is that the population is growing older. The median age will have increased from 27.8 in 1981 to 35.3 in 2011. The number of senior citizens (+ 65 age group) will increase from 15,000 to 34,000 or from 9% to 14% of the population by 2011. School age children will decrease from 25% to 21% of the total population by the same year. Households will become smaller as the birthrate continues to fall and more singles and single parent families fragment the housing market. Recent evidence, however, suggests that the fall in the birthrate may have levelled off and may increase slightly in the next decade. The city-wide implications of these trends needs to be examined.

New policies will have to be developed in light of these trends, especially to accommodate the needs of senior citizens as they become a larger segment of the population. With fewer school age children, the need to centre subdivision planning around the neighbourhood school site may be a less critical factor. Adaptive re-use of existing schools that have been closed or proposed for closure has certainly emerged as an issue in recent years.

With more leisure time and new employment concepts such as worksharing, a greater need will exist for park and recreational facilities. It has also been speculated that the communications revolution could drastically alter existing work patterns. Workers may not need to travel daily to a central office or plant. While the prospect of such events is probably beyond the time frame of the new plan, it does suggest that accepted ways of doing things may be considerably altered in the future. Planning objectives may also have to evolve and adapt to the needs of this changing urban environment.

A continuing population shift to lower density suburban neighbourhoods will make it increasingly difficult to provide cost efficient transit service because more route miles are required to serve the same number of persons as in a higher density neighbourhood. The dispersed travel patterns typical of the suburbs are also difficult to accommodate in a conventional radial transit system. A multi-destinational transit network with co-ordinated schedules will be needed to more effectively serve the current patterns of residential development. This would enable suburban passengers to transfer conveniently between low frequency routes for both downtown and non-downtown destinations.

The growth in the elderly population (traditionally a transit captive market), will increase the pressure to provide an effective transit network which meets the mobility needs of seniors. Consequently, it will be even more important to ensure that future neighbourhoods are designed so most residents have convenient access to a bus route. Similarly, locational guidelines should require future senior citizen housing projects to be located on or near a bus route.

With regard to housing, presently the cost of home ownership is not beyond the reach of most residents. However, with the possibility of housing costs rising faster than income and a decrease in family size, the demand for smaller, more energy efficient, and higher density housing could be revived. Already in some jurisdictions a trend towards "granny flats" (small self-contained units on the lot of an existing house) is becoming common. Other cities now permit detached dwellings to be subdivided into two separate units in areas formerly zoned exclusively for detached dwelling units. By these means, existing residential densities can be increased without requiring the development of additional peripheral lands and little new construction. The new development plan may wish to consider changing the existing zoning approach to accommodate these trends.

Another issue which may emerge if the economy enters another recessionary cycle is the concept of economic strategic planning. Already in the Province of Alberta (which has suffered much more than Saskatchewan during the most recent recession) the emphasis in development plans has moved away from social issues and towards policies designed to expand the economic base. While the new development plan will likely include an economic planning strategy formulated in conjunction with the Economic Development Department, the emphasis on social issues should not be placed in the background. Economic recessions usually exacerbate the social needs of those least able to cope with the system even during relatively prosperous times. Their needs cannot be forgotten as a balanced approach to development is required.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

This discussion paper has attempted to initiate the review process that is a necessary precursor to the preparation of a new development plan. Generally the paper reveals that Regina - RSVP has stood up fairly well as an overall planning strategy although its format and many of its issues and related policies require review and updating. Specifically, a number of findings that may prove useful for generating further discussion are noted below.

1. The overall planning strategy of Regina - RSVP has proven to be effective in its approach to the planning and land use issues confronting the City.

Regina - RSVP's emphasis on short-term issues, a long-term policy framework, public planning and a growth management strategy should continue to form the core planning philosphy of the new development plan. By this means, the City can reaffirm its commitment to resolve current planning and development problems in an atmosphere that encourages public involvement.

2. Although the overall Regina - RSVP planning strategy remains valid, many of the specific short-term policies and objectives have been fulfilled or have become dated.

Consequently, the major thrust of the development plan review will be to update existing policies and address emerging issues not dealt with in Regina - RSVP. Among the issues that have been identified are heritage preservation, social planning, energy efficient community development, economic development and housing. Additional effort needs to be placed on the feasibility of implementing the policies that are developed as this issue was not always adequately addressed in the existing plan.

3. The format of Regina - RSVP has become somewhat unwieldy with the number of additional background studies that have been adopted to fill the gaps in the original plan.

The new plan should include a revised format that consolidates all relevant planning policies and implementation measures into one document. Background studies approved by Council which provide the rationale for the policies should not directly form part of the plan. By this means a clearer more understandable plan can be formulated.

4. A strong effort should be made to involve other City departments in the preparation of and a commitment to the new plan.

If the plan is to be truly effective, it needs to have the involvement of all City departments affected by its policies. A stronger commitment to the plan could result if it is viewed to be more than just the Planning Department's document. It must be recognized, however, that in practice each department will still wish to set its own agenda and priorities, and not necessarily be bound by another department's goals. Nevertheless, the desirability of this objective needs to be recognized, even if the realities of City administrative divisions do not permit its complete fulfillment. Incorporating the corporate goals and objectives into the plan may be one means of fostering greater commitment.

5. Reductions in senior government funding and involvement in housing and land development poses a fundamental question concerning the municipal role in these areas.

With the gradual withdrawal of SHC from both infill housing and suburban land development, the City must decide whether a more direct involvement in the housing market would be appropriate at this time. Accordingly, the new development plan should address this issue in terms of the costs, benefits, and political considerations involved. The City has already assumed the full costs of neighbourhood improvement programs as a result of the withdrawal of federal government funding. If other changes occurred in provincial government funding for urban assistance,

for major arterial road construction or grants for recreational facilities, the ability of the City to provide these services would also be affected.

6. The development plan, as well as focusing on short-term issues, needs to take a broad conceptual view of the future City beyond the 15 to 20 year horizon to take into account possible growth options.

Although development beyond the 15 to 20 year horizon is realistically almost impossible to anticipate, development that will take place in the next few years will determine the growth options for the more distant period. It would be opportune to identify, at least at the conceptual level, what those growth options are in order that they are not precluded by short-term development. The "Working Paper on Suburban Growth Options" has already completed much of the necessary background work.

7. The new plan should attempt to anticipate population and demographic trends which will affect the type of long-range policies required to meet future needs.

An aging population and increased energy and housing costs are just two trends that will require a re-evaluation of existing planning policies and objectives to ensure that these issues are addressed in the new plan.

The next step in the work program will involve circulation of this discussion paper for review and comment. Based on the comments that are received, any necessary revisions to the paper will be made as a prelude to the preparation of an issue statement and the beginning of the public participation program.

Appendix A

Specific policies that have become fulfilled or dated, require updating or have emerged since Regina - RSVP Policies extracted from Regina - RSVP are underlined, with appropriate commentary below.

A. Strategy of Public Planning

1. That information about City issues shall be made available to the widest possible audience.

Providing information is basically an on-going and fundamental process that should continue after the plan is adopted. The early stages of the development plan work program will include some type of mail out to every household in the City to provide information about the planning issues involved.

2. That the City shall initiate a series of seminars to help explain all aspects of municipal government.

As discussed previously, two seminars were held in 1984 with all the community associations to explain the development approval process. These seminars should continue to be held as necessary if there appears to be sufficient interest.

3. That information about City department activities and functions shall be regularly communicated to the public.

This is another on-going process that some City departments have used with varying degrees of success. The bi-monthly water bill inserts is an example of an existing program. This objective needs to be pursued more vigourously with all City departments if City Hall is to be truly responsive to the public. In some instances, such as the distribution of Council agendas to community groups, little progress has been made to date.

4. A City information office should be maintained in the downtown.

No such facility has been in existence since 1977 since the original purpose was fulfilled. Other avenues that are more cost-efficient could be pursued, such as providing an effective information and pamphlet display in the ground floor kiosk area of City Hall.

5. Neighbourhood planning, including site offices which can act as the focal point for community involvement, shall continue.

A neighbourhood site office and a separate community development section within the Planning Department continue to function as part of a neighbourhood planning strategy. Because of budgetary constraints it has not been possible to maintain a site office in every neighbourhood as was the original intention.

6. That City Council with senior City administration should sponsor "town hall" type meetings in various parts of the City to facilitate and encourage dialogue on important urban issues. Wide ranging discussions and in-depth consideration of major issues are not always possible in the more structured environments of Council meetings with set agendas.

This policy has never met with any great deal of enthusiasm. Unless Council is willing to hold such meetings and unless there is sufficient interest on the part of the public to attend them, the policy will remain unfulfilled. The need for such meetings should perhaps be re-evaluated.

7. That support funds and human resources shall continue to be made available so that the public can articulate their views on important issues. (For example, the grant structure presently used by the Planning Department to support some of the activities of community groups. It should be recognized that this support may also involve a group's right to dissent on any city project or policy).

Funding of inner city groups has been an on-going program since Regina - RSVP was adopted. The funding program is presently under review.

8. That the City Administration examine itself to determine if the present organization can satisfactorily respond to Council and the public and determine if the current structure can adequately produce policy responses to today's more complex urban problems. (For example, City Council and senior staff should meet at least twice yearly in day-long sessions to evaluate progress and examine policies and priorities).

The latter meetings have been held for the past four years although their mandate has been expanded to include corporate expectations for the City.

9. That the Regina Planning Commission become a more active and aggressive voice in the major planning issues to be discussed in this City.

The Commission has attempted to undertake this role in reviewing all planning studies prior to Council's approval. The level of the Commission's involvement is based to a certain extent, on the interest and desires of its members. However, the Commission's role needs to be re-evaluated, addressing its size, mandate, and membership, in order to ensure that it continues to perform effectively.

B. Rail Relocation

1) That the total rail relocation program shall be endorsed and implemented.

2) That infill housing shall be the major land use component of the vacated CNR yards.

3) That the CPR yards in downtown Regina shall be redeveloped in keeping with the urban design and planning principles (i.e. a sensitive mix of open space, community facilities, housing, office and retail developments) of the award winning Duplay Scheme and in such a way so as not to turn its back on the existing core uses but rather to act as a catalyst to integrate the present downtown core and the Warehouse Area to the north.

4) That the vacated railway corridors shall be utilized as potential public transit corridors to serve the future growth areas of northwest and southeast Regina.

5) No development shall occur which impacts on the areas affected by the proposed relocations of the CNR and CPR yards unless such development is complementary to and in conformity with the proposed re-use of the relocation lands.

These policies are still valid although the redevelopment of the CPR yards may not follow the Duplay scheme. Recent development proposals such as SuperValu have altered the development options for the lands but sections of the vacated corridors can be utilized for public transit.

6) That early consideration shall be given to a special type of "Authority" to oversee total rail relocation and subsequent redevelopment activity.

The Rail Relocation office was established in 1980-81.

7) That a special zone shall be provided in the zoning bylaw to control land uses on the existing CNR and CPR rail yards and lines (See Map 1) and that the permitted uses for this zone shall be restricted to present rail line operations thereby making uses not directly related to rail operations legal non-conforming uses. And that all proposed developments shall require rezonings, thus allowing the municipal and provincial governments to control future development on these lands in light of public policy respecting rail relocation.

The RR - Railway Zone was established in the zoning bylaw. With redevelopment of the CNR yards drawing nearer, the various land use and zoning control alternatives are being explored.

8) That downtown rail passenger service be retained using Union Station as the passenger terminal and:

a) either retaining the existing CPR mainline or,
b) using the mainline Stub "Y" option.

This possibility is still under discussion.

C. Downtown Policies (As outlined in Regina Development Plan)

1. That Council shall acquire land for the construction of parking facilities on the periphery of downtown and adjacent to a major arterial.

The City did contribute to the construction of the Cornwall Centre Parkade. This policy has now been superceded by a series of parking related policies in the new downtown plan.

2. That Council shall increase the enforcement of its parking meter bylaw in order to discourage long-term parking, thereby freeing spaces for short-term parking.

Still a valid policy that should be implemented on a routine basis.

3. That the City shall take the initiative in demonstrating the need for employees to leave their cars at home and instead to use public transit to get downtown. (This can be done by turning over some of the employee parking for public use. In return, City employees would receive transit passes either free or at a reduced price).

Not implemented owing to different priorities on the part of the City Administration. Other complications is the taxation system which exempts parking spaces but taxes bus passes as a benefit.

4. That parking standards shall be closely monitored as results of transit improvements become evident.

The policy is superfluous.

5. That Council, at its direction, may waive all or part of the parking requirements in the DC - Downtown Core zone in exchange for payment-in-lieu, in accordance with the provision of the Planning and Development Act.

The policy has been implemented.

6. That the Ring Road shall be completed to facilitate cross-city travel.

This project has been virtually completed.

7. That a new east-west traffic route shall be constructed in the core area to accommodate east-west movements in and out of the downtown.

This policy has been implemented by the construction of Saskatchewan Drive.

8. That the City shall carefully examine and implement those recommendations of the Transportation Policy and Transit Improvement Study for the City of Regina designed to improve transit in the downtown. (For example, exclusive bus lanes in peak hours and better designed bus shelters are certainly necessary if transit improvements are to be realized).

This policy has been implemented.

9. That the City shall initiate a core development fund of at least 1/2 mill per year which could be used to initiate core improvements and that a management structure be established to administer these funds.

This policy has been implemented through the establishment of the Business Improvement District and its successor, Regina Market Square.

10. That future core development shall be directed north of 11th Avenue and west of Scarth Street.

This policy was fulfilled in that the existing pattern of development in the southeastern part of the downtown was redirected through the construction of the Cornwall Centre.

11. That the City shall explore additional development control so that Council can continue to exercise its perogative in the future development of the core.

The new downtown plan employs the land-use control provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 1983 where they were found to be appropriate.

12. That the DC - Downtown Core zones shall be restricted to the downtown as defined in Map 2.

This policy is superceded by the zoning policies of the downtown plan.

13. That City Council shall support the use of the downtown for activities in addition to those presently in the downtown.

14. That City Council shall support the use of the downtown as a place for public gathering and public affairs.

15. That City Council shall support the use of the downtown for certain off-hour and Sunday activities.

These are policies that are valid but vague in their means of implementation. Incentives are addressed in the new Downtown Plan.

16. That City Council shall support the residential policies for the Transitional Area.

This policy is not directly relevant to the downtown, but has been implemented.

17. That City Council shall initiate a study on all aspects of commercial development in Regina.

The Retail Market Study was completed in September 1981. A one year hold (that has been extended and is still in effect) was placed on all new developments of 50,000 or more square feet. The 'hold' is reviewed annually by Council.

18. That all applicants for major commercial developments in the City shall conduct a market analysis illustrating the anticipated impacts on the Downtown and the potential redevelopment of the CPR yards. No development shall be permitted which is shown by such analysis to have a detrimental impact on the Downtown or the potential redevelopment of the CPR yards.

This policy was implemented in the case of Victoria Square Mall and Eastgate Commercial Park. Its continuing validity needs to be addressed.

With regard to heritage, reference should be made to the report "A Heritage Program for the Downtown" dated October, 1983 as adopted by City Council on February 6, 1984. These policies are proposed for inclusion in the downtown plan.

D. Inner City

Policy Recommendations

a) That a sound information base shall be established on inner city housing and that this information base include studies on absentee landlords, demolition of housing and housing needs.

This policy was never implemented, although the housing study will contain most of the necessary information, but only on a city-wide basis. An updated information base is desirable if specific policies for inner city housing are to be developed, monitored and implemented.

b) That a housing coordinator shall be hired to liaise with other governments, obtain funding, evaluate existing programs and generally coordinate inner city housing policies.

Because the policy was never implemented, the impact may have been a negative one in that the Administration has not played enough of a role in this area - an uncoordinated, ad hoc approach to issues as they develop. It remains relevant and was reiterated in the Mayor's Task Force on Housing report and in the draft housing study.

c) That immediate increases in the purchase of property for inner city public housing shall be pursued through existing federal/provincial programs.

Little or no impact has occurred. Public housing has continued to be built but there have been no significant increases as a result of the policy. However, it is still relevant because delivery of public housing by senior levels of government must still be encouraged, especially in a period of budget constraints.

d) That the City shall lobby CMHC for a single person hostel that would provide accommodation for single people in the downtown areas similar to that project presently existing in downtown Vancouver.

Although the City lobbied, the project was never implemented. The policy is relevant, nevertheless, as the conditions still exist, and to some extent other agencies such as the Salvation Army have stepped in to partially fill the void. If economic conditions stay as they are, or even worsen, the situation with respect to this homeless class may become more critical. A needs study is currently nearing completion.

e) That the City of Regina or other agencies shall undertake a land banking program in the inner city and shall support housing cooperatives and non-profit housing corporations by selling land to these housing groups over a long time period with little or no interest changes.

This policy was only partially implemented. Land banking was only undertaken in connection with Saskatchewan Housing Corporation's Infill Housing Program; the latter half of the policy was never implemented. It is still a relevant policy, but Senior governments do not presently place significant emphasis on coop housing. The issue needs to be re-evaluated as part of the Development Plan review.

f) That the City shall request Saskatchewan Housing Corporation to promote and assist in the development of coop housing in Regina's Inner City.

This policy was never implemented but will be addressed in the upcoming housing study.

g) That the City shall encourage private groups such as churches, clubs and unions to sponsor housing projects and community services needed in the inner city.

Never implemented. Cooperatives have built their housing projects at their preferred sites with little or no input from the City. It remains a relevant policy that will be addressed in the upcoming housing study. Coops will be encouraged to take advantage of Federal government funding that is presently available.

h) That the City shall continue an ongoing program of neighbourhood improvement through the Neighbourhood Improvement Area Program.

This policy has had considerable impact on the provision of community centres and other facilities, fostering active community/resident involvement/interest in neighbourhood, and heightening awareness of developers and City that more sensitivity has to be demonstrated in terms of development in inner city neighbourhoods.

It is still relevant although circumstances have changed in that there is no longer any senior government funding. Because most of the eligible neighbourhoods have now had a NIA program, the NIA 3 Site Selection report recommended that alternatives to the current approach to delivering the program be explored prior to designation of NIA 4 in 1987.

i) That neighbourhood planning shall be an ongoing process with continued financial support to community groups who take part.

Formally recognizing, through funding, the legitimacy of community groups to speak on behalf of their neighbourhoods has forced both the City and developers to approach development with greater sensitivity to its impact on an existing situation. In fact, Council now encourages all groups to take part in this process and their comments are almost mandatory inclusions before Council will entertain a report.

The intent of the policy is still relevant, but the practice requires updating. This is currently being explored.

j) That a neighbourhood plan shall be completed by each neighbourhood designated as a neighbourhood planning area.

Draft plans were prepared but little or no emphasis was placed on developing implementation mechanisms. Therefore the plans had very little impact.

This policy is now dated. The Department is embarking on a program of neighbourhood planning with significant input from community groups.

k) That an Inner City Advisory Group shall be established in keeping with the Inner City Strategy.

The policy had little impact because of diminishing interest. An attempt was made 2 years ago, but without a clear mandate, the group disbanded after 3 meetings.

A possible alternative is one which is currently taking shape - the four inner city community associations have formed their own Inner City Advisory Committee. Once (if) established, this group could possibly undertake a similar role that had been envisaged for the Advisory Group.

l) That the City shall endeavour to obtain more land for open space in the inner city.

No direct impact of this policy. More land has been obtained through the NIP/NIA programs, but that was part of their mandate. This policy is also being recognized though in the urban redevelopment schemes of Rail Relocation. The policy is still relevant because developed open space is still a rare commodity in the inner city. Parks and Recreation are now undertaking a major Open Space Study which will address all open space requirements.

If densities are increased and/or if the inner city becomes a more desirable location for younger families due to more affordable housing, efforts may have to be increased in this regard.

m) That policies related to the inner city shall be reflected in the Five Year Capital Works Program.

Generally, this policy relates to all issues in the Development Plan and is a matter of fiscal policy/planning coordination. It is still relevant.

n) No development shall occur that conflicts with the policies of the Inner City Development Plan.

General statement of intent that development plan shall be adhered to is still relevant for the new plan.

E. Suburban Growth

1. Policy Objective

To ensure that future peripheral residential growth occurs in accordance with approved plans contained in the Municipal Develoment Plan as piecemeal, ad hoc residential development is often costly in terms of public expenditure, (eg. infrastructure, schools, fire and police protection, recreation, community facilities and public transit).

Related Policies

a) That future residential development shall occur as outlined in the Northwest and Southeast Sector plans.

b) Future residential development shall not be permitted in an area bounded by the CNR Lewvan Line to the east, the City limits to the south and west and Wascana Creek and Dewdney Avenue to the north (see Map 4).

c) Future residential development of land adjacent to the Regina Airport shall be governed by the Airport Environs policies as outlined in the Development Plan.

d) Other land not specifically mentioned above which falls within the limits of the City of Regina and which is appropriate for residential development may proceed if approved by City Council in accordance with the subdivision bylaw of the City of Regina.

As noted earlier in this paper, residential development has taken place in the Northwest and Southeast sectors of the City. A small annexation added a southerly extension of Albert Park to the Trans Canada Highway in keeping with the plan. With regard to the Southwest Sector and the airport lands, it would appear from the discussion in Section 3.2.2 that a sector plan should now be done for that area. The recommendation stems from the fact that at the current rate of development, all existing developable lands could be developed by the year 2001.

Other possible expansion areas were also noted in Section 3.2.2. As a result, the policies will have to be updated to reflect the latest projections of future suburban development.

2. Policy Objective

To ensure that planned suburban growth and the City's capital programming be highly integrated since growth of the City's periphery is costly in terms of infrastructure.

Related Policy

That phasing, timing and spatial development of Regina's planned suburban residential growth shall be reflected in the Five Year Capital Program of the City of Regina.

This process has been followed among the Public Works and Engineering Department, the Planning Department and the City Manager's Office on a yearly update basis. It remains an appropriate means of forecasting the need for municipal infrastructure.

3. Policy Objective

To continue and expand the City's role as land developer in promoting the development of new types of housing through the use of land assembly programs and CMHC housing programs.

Related Policies

a) That the city shall maintain control or influence at least 35 percent of the suburban housing market in the future and this control shall be accomplished through the further banking of land or through profit-control agreements with private developers. (In recent years, the City, in partnership with both public and private developers has had an extensive involvement in the suburban housing market. This involvement which has generally taken the form of acquiring lands for development or through profit-control agreements with private developers has resulted in the control of approximately 35 percent to 50 percent or more of the market in the last few years).

b) That housing for all income groups shall be available in suburban areas.

The City has continued its role (5% interest) in the partnership with SHC and CMHC. However, the objective of maintaining, controlling, or influencing 35% of the suburban housing market has not been met. The partnership over the previous 6 years has controlled about 23% of the market. Even if the Richmond Place subdivision owned by the City, is added, the percentage is still less than 30%. As noted earlier, SHC anticipates a diminishing role in the suburban housing market. Further, profit control agreements with private developers are now virtually unknown.

Through the partnership some effort has been made to ensure that the lower to middle income group, only partially served by the private sector, was provided with housing opportunities in suburban areas. Generally lands developed under the partnership contained smaller lots and/or more multiple housing than privately-developed subdivisions, thus increasing the range of housing opportunities available. However, it was also the intent of Regina - RSVP that these housing policies also apply to private development, although no major effort was made to enforce this. A question to be addressed in the new plan is whether it is feasible (politically or otherwise) to try to ensure a mix of housing types in all new suburban development.

With a reduced SHC presence, the City is at an important crossroads regarding its role in suburban housing. A decision has to be made whether it is the proper sphere for the City to be involved in this market, and if so, can we afford the costs involved. If the answers to these questions are yes, then the existing policies will have to be reaffirmed by a suburban land acquisition program to replace SHC's diminishing role. In addition, the City will have to review lobbying efforts with the senior levels of government for new programs to assist in the construction of rental housing.

4. Policy Objective

To increase suburban residential densities in order to reduce servicing costs, preserve prime agricultural lands and facilitate public transit.

Related Policies

a) That a mixture of new forms of housing with some increase in density shall be encouraged. (This mix could be accomplished through the use of zero lot line development or more innovative forms of residential development).

b) That low density residential suburban growth shall be examined in light of its impact on the downtown, the Inner City, public transit and the possible redevelopment of the CPR yards.

c) That the efficient use of public transit shall be promoted through the sensitive design and densification of future suburban development.

d) New suburban subdivisions shall reflect policies designed to improve public transit (for example, increased density) before zoning takes place.

These policies have, at best, met with mixed success. While densities have increased slightly from the era before Regina - RSVP, actual number have fallen short of the density targets (5-6 units per acre instead of the 7-8 proposed). Generally, developers and the market appear to have resisted smaller lots and multiple housing opportunities because they argue, the consumer wants larger lots and lower densities. As well, after the initial PUD and zero lot line housing subdivisions were completed, the technical problems associated with these mechanisms seemed to discourage their future use. One encouraging aspect of this issue is the recent development by the private sector of planned group of

detached dwellings on smaller lots or as condominium projects. In order to further encourage this type of development, the regulations for planned groups should be reviewed to ease some of the more onerous restrictions.

The concerns of transit vis-a-vis subdivision design and density is an issue that only recently has come to the forefront. Developers are now being encouraged to locate all higher density projects on future bus routes and to design the street layout to reduce walking distances to these routes.

Increased suburban residential densities remains a viable objective for the reasons outlined earlier in this paper. However, new means of achieving this objective may have to be developed to encourage the private sector to become part of the process instead of resisting the need for higher density. Policies that might be considered include requiring a minimum percentage of their lots to be no greater than 50 feet in width, and/or restricting the amount of R1 zoning in any one subdivision and/or allowing conversions of existing dwellings in R1 areas.

5. Policy Objective

To maintain a desirable balance between inner city/suburban growth and city wide housing demand in order to avoid artificial supply deficiencies and a resulting increase in the cost of housing.

Related Policies

a) That the cost of the peripheral expansion shall continue to be borne by the developer.

b) That as a desired balance between Inner City and suburban residential growth, a target of 15 percent shall be allocated to the Inner City. This target shall consist of both new and rehabilitated units indexed to the total number of new housing starts in any one year, as defined by CMHC data.

Peripheral expansion has mostly been borne by the developer through the hectarage assessment system. (Provincial grants and City funds pay some costs.) The developer, in turn, passes these costs onto the home buyer. This system should be maintained as it ensures that the entire city does not have to pay for the full cost of suburban expansion.

A recent background study "Redevelopment and Infill", shows that only 7.8% of the housing starts in the 1978-83 period were in the inner city. Again, it would appear to have any hope of ever achieving this goal, government incentives or housing programs will be necessary. One consideration would be the removal of any hectarage assessment charges on redevelopment in the inner city. Additional open space and recreational facilities are needed to increase the attractiveness of the inner city. The closure of a number of inner city schools may open additional opportunities for infill residential development on the one hand, but discourage families from locating there on the other because of the lack of school facilities for children.

6. Policy Objective

To rationalize future suburban retail growth in terms of city wide objectives - downtown, possible CPR yard redevelopment.

Related Policy

All major commercial development shall be subject to the market analysis provisions of the Downtown Section (Chapter 4.0, Policy #18).

The City Administration has recommended against the approval of large new suburban shopping centres and major expansions of existing ones. The Victoria Square Shopping Centre was approved by Council despite the Administration's recommendations and thus represented a major departure from Regina - RSVP. With the advent of the floor area ratio controls on the DSC - Designated Shopping Centre zone, major expansions are controlled by the rezoning process. Most major commercial developments

have undertaken a market study before approval was granted. This is a rational means for assessing the impact of a major development and should be retained in the new plan. In addition, there is a continuing freeze on new commercial developments of 50,000 square feet or more.

7. Policy Objective

To protect the major entrances to the City.

Related Policy

Those lands immediately adjacent to and fronting on Highway #1 from the City limits to the Ring Road/Highway #1 Bypass shall be primarily developed as highway service uses.

This policy has been fulfilled as these lands are zoned HS - Highway Service. However, the policy needs to go beyond zoning and address the image of and sense of arrival in this area.

F. Transportation
Policies

1. That the Ring Road, the Pasqua-Lewvan Expressway and the East-West Expressway shall be completed with a view to integrating public transit usage.

Transit has not found it advantageous to route buses on limited access roadways, and will be unlikely to do so until express routes are introduced.

2. No development shall be permitted that conflicts with the provisions of adequate transportation facilities, in particular road widenings and new road and transit alignments as described in Transportation Update Study (Recommended Road Network Plan), City of Regina, 1975 and subsequent amendments.

The policy is still valid.

Transit

1. That the City shall initiate exclusive bus lanes on appropriate major arterial streets.

2. That the City shall improve and expand upon the provision of adequate public transit shelters, particularly in the downtown.

3. That the City shall establish a senior interdepartmental committee to implement the policy recommendations of the Transportation Policy and Transit Improvement Study for the City of Regina.

These policies have been fulfilled.

4) That the City shall launch an aggressive public awareness and publicity campaign promoting the use of public transit. This promotion should also include package deals for commuters and downtown employers to support transit usage.

This policy is now being implemented.

G. Open Space and Recreation

Policies

1. That top priority shall be given to upgrading the maintenance system.

2. That second level priority shall be given to development of neighbourhood recreation centres.

3. That third priority shall be given to the development of community recreation centres.

4. That fourth level priority shall be given to the initiation of hiking, bicycling and cross-country skiing trails.

5. That fifth level priority shall be given to the land acquisition of important landscapes for their preservation and availability for development as future district parks.

6. That sixth priority shall be given to the development of district and city parks.

7. That the School Board shall investigate alternative methods of providing enough land to meet the Board of Education standards for school sites rather than using public reserve lands as part of the school site.

8. That the City in the future shall investigate:

a) the development of a north-west park facility,
b) the future development of park facilities,
c) the development of the creek systems and other regional parks

The priorities established by these policies are being re-evaluated as part of the Parks Department's major open space study and the PERC study. The Planning Department is participating in this study.

H. Airport Standards

1. To ensure compatible land use in the vicinity of the airport for the existing facilities and proposed expansion.

Policy Recommendations and Implementation

a) That further subdivision of land for residential use and all further residential development in any part of the City shall, except as permitted by Paragraph 2 below, be prohibited in areas where the Noise Exposure Forecast (NEF) based on the 1986 Noise Exposure forecast ratings as prepared for Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation by the Minister of Transport (See Map 1) or the 1996 Noise Exposure Forecast ratings as indicated in the Final Report and Recommendations of the Regina Airport Study (See Map 2) is 30 NEF or greater.

b) Notwithstanding the above, noise insulated infill residential development may occur where the NEF based on the 1986 or 1996 Noise Exposure Ratings does not exceed 35 and where such residential development complies with the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation structural noise insulation requirements. Such residential development shall only be permitted within the built-up areas on lands with an NEF rating exceeding 30 NEF.

Although those will remain valid policies, it may be necessary to include revised NEF maps once the Ministry of Transport's study is completed.

c) That no use which is incompatible with airport operations be permitted. Potentially incompatible uses shall be controlled through the discretionary use procedure in the zoning bylaw. The City shall be guided by the principles of the Transport Canada document, Land Use in the Vicinity of Airports in planning and controlling land use and development in the airport environs.

d) That the height of structures within the vicinity of the airport shall not exceed height limitations established by the Regina Airport Zoning Regulations as established by the Ministry of Transport.

Both of these policies are still valid.

I. Flood Plain

a) That no person shall carry out any development within the 1 in 500 year flood plain designated in the Wascana Creek Flood Study prepared by the Qu'Appelle Basin Study Board or the Pilot Butte Flood Study without the permission of the City Council.

b) Those lands in the South-East Sector as outlined in the Wascana Creek Flood Study and the Pilot Butte Flood Hazard Study and subject to the 1 in 500 year flooding shall be dedicated to the public use as parks, natural areas or areas for public recreational use in addition to those lands dedicated for public reserve through subdivision requirements.

c) All undeveloped land in Regina subject to the 1 in 500 year flooding shall be placed in the Flood Plain zone.

These policies are still valid.

J. Wascana Centre

a) That the future planning and development of the Wascana Centre Authority reflect the land use and policy objectives of the City of Regina's growth management strategy.

This policy is still valid, although there may need to be improved consultation between the City and Wascana Centre Authority on planning matters. For example new office buildings have been constructed in the Centre, with plans for additional buildings. Such development is contrary to the growth management strategy that major office construction occur downtown.

K. Those areas not included in the Inner City Development Plan or the Suburban Growth Section.

a) That the predominantly single family character of these neighbourhoods be maintained. Any new multi-family development shall require a rezoning and be assessed in terms of its environment impact on the neighbourhood.

This policy is still valid.

b) That existing commercial developments in these neighbourhoods be recognized. Any further commercial developments shall require a rezoning and be examined in light of its impact on the neighbourhood.

This policy has been modified by the Neighbourhood Commercial Study. Those commercial development not recognized by the study have been made legally non-conforming with the view that they will eventually be phased out.

L. Industrial/Residential Interface

a) That buffer strips shall be required between residential and industrial lots irrespective of whether a lane is provided between these uses.

b) That buffer strips shall not be required where a street is provided between the residential and industrial lots.

c) That buffer strips shall be landscaped in a manner which is determined as appropriate by City Council or its designate, in conformance with current Council policy. Landscape plans for buffer strips shall indicate the type, location, spacing and setback distances of trees, shrubs or any other vegetation to be planted.

These policies are still valid.

M. Victoria Avenue East

Policies for this area will form an appendix to the new Development Plan.